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AN ARCHAIC PATERA FROM KOURION.

[PLATE VII.]

In the Cesnola Collection in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, is an archaic silver patera from room *D* of the temple at Kourion (CESNOLA, *Cyprus*, p. 326). We reproduce it here in the size of the original.

The central medallion, probably a rosette, has entirely disappeared. Of the first ornamental zone only two lotus flowers remain; but the juxtaposition of the flowers suggests an ornamentation of purely floral design, or of flowers interspersed with figures, as in the case of other pateræ from Kourion and Golgos (*Cyprus*, pp. 316, 337, pl. xi). The second zone, bounded above and below by the torsade or twisted rope ornament, contained ornamentation partly symbolical (composite animals on either side of the Phoinikian palmette or sacred tree) and partly pictorial (a huntsman in rapid pursuit of long-antlered stags). The sacred tree, placed beneath the principal figure on the outer zone, assists to fix the eye upon this spot as the centre of interest; while the movement of the hunting-scene, in the reverse direction to that upon the outer zone, secures for itself an independent significance. If we may look for more than mere decoration in the hunting-scene, a local interpretation may be found by describing it as the Phoinikian Herakles chasing the stags of Apollon, emblematical of the religious conflict between the Phoinikian and Greek constituents of the population of Kourion.

In contrast with this is the peaceful scene of the outer zone. It is a banquet-scene. The two chief personages recline upon couches on either side of a table laden with fruit: behind them are musicians, an amphora, a second table, and attendants bringing offerings. The meaning of the scene is not self-evident, and for its interpretation we must frame an hypothesis. The reclining figures appear to be of opposite sex, and might be interpreted as husband and wife, king and queen, or god and goddess. But we should naturally expect the family banquet to be represented in a different manner. In the Feast of Assurbanipal (PERROT and CHIPIEZ, II, figs. 27, 28) the king reclines upon a couch, while the queen is seated upon a chair. Upon a sarcophagus from Golgos (CESNOLA, *Cyprus*, pl. x) the females are seated upon the couches

on which the males recline. Similar modes of representation occur in banquet-scenes in general, upon Kypriote as well as upon Greek and Etruscan monuments. In Roman times, this became the established method of representing divine as well as human banquets: witness the reliefs and vase-paintings, and the following passage from Valerius Maximus (*lib. II, cap. 1, § 2*): *Feminae cum viris cubantibus sedentes coenitabant: quae consuetudo ex hominum convictu ad divina penetravit; nam Jovis epulo ipse in lectulum, Juno et Minerva in sellas, ad coenam invitantur. Quod genus severitatis aetas nostra diligentius in Capitolio quam in suis domibus servat: videlicet quia magis ad rem pertinet dearum quam mulierum disciplinam contineri.* Upon this patera, however, the female occupies a separate couch which is higher than the other, and in the scheme of decoration holds a more important position. Hence, we suggest that she represents the Kypriote Aphrodite, and that her youthful consort is Adonis. Between them is a table laden with fruit, which we recognize as the *φοινικοῦν μᾶλον*, or pomegranate, sacred to both divinities and symbolic of the fruitfulness of their union (VICTOR HEHN, *Kulturpflanzen u. Haustiere*, pp. 192-98). The round object which each holds appears to be the pomegranate. On either side of the basket of pomegranates is figured the table-cloth, which, like the covering of the couches, is drawn without regard to perspective. The three musicians follow the same order as on the archaic bronze patera from Idalion (CESNOLA, *Cyprus*, p. 77), first the double pipe, then the lyre, then the tambourine. The difference in the arrangement of the hair or head-dress of the last musicians may be remarked. In the Idalion patera, we observe a difference in costume between the player of the double pipe and of the lyre, and that the two costumes alternate with each other in the band of attendants. This seems to indicate both the diverse origin of the two forms of music and their union in the cult of Aphrodite in Kypros. Behind the musicians follows an attendant with wine jug and cup. Next is a huge Bacchic amphora with geometric decoration, and a table upon which are vases and *simpula* for the *σπονδαί* which were offered to Aphrodite (ATHEN., XII. 310). The amphora and table for liquid offerings serve to more completely represent the Aphrodisiac or Adonis festival which is here portrayed, and at the same time to divide into groups the continuous band of figures: the groups, however, are not symmetrical. Next in order are the attendants. The first brings trays of fruit; the second carries two long-necked jugs (*cf.* PRISSÉ D'AVENNES, pl. *Art Industriel, vases des tributaires de Kafa*,

No. 5); the third carries branches. The subject reminds us of the attendants upon an Assyrian royal banquet in the Kouyundjik reliefs (LAYARD, *Mon. of Nineveh*, 2d series, pls. 8, 9). Last of all is the dove, sacred to Aphrodite. The remaining figures of the outer zone probably also consisted of attendants and musicians. On the under side of the patera is a brief and somewhat defaced Kypriote inscription, which has not been deciphered in time for this publication.

In style the archaic patera from Idalion is closely related to this one from Kourion. The Idalion patera seems to represent a festival in honor of Aphrodite. The goddess is seated upon a throne and holds a lotus flower and a pomegranate: the three musicians are present, and the tables of fruit and liquid offerings: attendants with united hands are led by one of their number, who approaches the goddess, holding before her sacred symbols. The patera from Idalion is more carefully executed than the one from Kourion, but is inferior to it in conception and beauty. Both are rude, as works of art, and less strongly affected by foreign influences than other published Kypriote pateræ.

The scene figured upon our patera seems to be the autumnal Adonis-festival, in which honor was paid to both Adonis and Aphrodite. The famous festival to Adonis and Aphrodite given by Ptolemaios Philadelphos and Arsinoë at Alexandria was an autumnal festival, held in the twelfth Ptolemaic month (*i. e.*, October, see *A. J. A.*, I, p. 28). Gifts of ripe fruit were brought in silver baskets, and of Syrian incense in golden alabastra, and were placed before the god and goddess, who reclined on separate couches. In the song of the Argive maiden, Aphrodite is addressed as *δέσποινα, ἃ Γολγῶς τε καὶ Ἰδάλιον ἐφίλασας*, also as *Κύπρις* (THEOK., *Idyl* XV). Thus both song and festival look back to Kypros for their origin. Does not this patera furnish us with the prototype?

ALLAN MARQUAND.

*Princeton College,
Princeton, N. J.*



KYPRIOTE PATERA FROM KOURION,
IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK.